

August 25<sup>st</sup>, 2009

**Mr. Malcolm Rodman**  
**Chairman**  
**The English-Speaking Union of Argentina**

Dear Mr. Rodman,

I am pleased to write you a few words in order to brief my experience on the English Speaking Union (ESU) International Relations Summer Conference held from August 9<sup>th</sup> to August 15<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Mansfield College, Oxford.

During my stay in Mansfield, I was delighted with the most varied group of delegates: 35 delegates from 29 international English-Speaking Union branches attended the Conference. Different nationalities, mother tongues, cultures, professions and work positions met at Oxford.

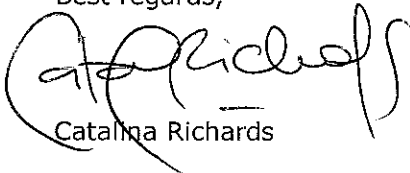
Oxford's relaxed and intellectual environment was the perfect setting for this forum. From an academic perspective, I was honoured to meet important people that lectured, spoke or joined us for dinner. The remarkable life experience and the academic and professional background of all the speakers made each session unique and very interesting. They were able to present controversial issues to a multicultural and varied audience in a very tactful and respectful manner. They held our attention through over an hour and we even wanted to learn more! The courses were highly interactive, questions after each presentation and debates during coffee breaks enriched and deepened the understanding of some issues and opened the communication between the delegates. Solid and sound opinions were supported and challenged at the same time and made us think again over many relevant situations that affect the global community and its dynamics.

Each topic was carefully selected and prepared for the conference. They challenged us to think globally and to understand that each state cannot look inwards exclusively as they are inextricable linked with one another in today's World. In that sense, English language enabled us not only to express ourselves but also it was the instrument for communication and understanding between delegates hoping for a new and better World. As the ESU says, "*the world desperately needs international understanding and the reach of English provides a way of achieving it.*"

The Conference has indeed been a remarkable experience not only academically, but also in professional and personal aspects. Therefore, I would like to thank everyone that made this life experience possible: to ESU Argentina and to my firm who encouraged me to apply for the Conference and, of course, to the ESU's superb staff.

After my days in Oxford, I am more convinced than ever that the English language builds bridges to communicate people in spite of their differences. Furthermore, it is a transmitter of universal values, such as democracy, freedom, peace, tolerance, equal opportunity to prosper, and solidarity. Attending the ESU International Relations Summer Conference gave me the opportunity to reaffirm, share and spread these values, which are a powerful tool to enhance communication and understanding among nations. I will definitely keep in touch and commit not only to work hard towards international cooperation but also to foster the ESU's mission.

Best regards,

  
Catalina Richards